



Choice Program Overview





VA | U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM: WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Eligibility requirements as of December 1, 2015

Wait-Time (30 Days)

The Veteran is informed by his/her local VA medical facility that they are not able to schedule an appointment for care either:

- Within 30 days of the date the Veteran's physician determines the Veteran needs to be seen, or
- Within 30 days of the date the Veteran wishes to be seen



A Veteran must be enrolled in VA healthcare and meet one of the surrounding criteria.

Distance

The closest VA medical facility where the Veteran can see a full-time primary care physician is more than 40 miles driving distance from his/her home.



No full-service VA facility

The Veteran lives in a state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility and lives more than 20 miles from such a facility. This applies to Veterans who live in Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the U.S. Virgin Islands).

(Note that the Veteran is not eligible under this criterion if he/she lives in New Hampshire and within 20 miles of the White River Junction VAMC.)



Unique Travel

The Veteran has to travel by air, boat, or ferry to the nearest VA medical facility.



Unusual or Excessive Burden

The Veteran faces an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to a VA medical facility based on geographic challenges, environmental factors, a medical condition, the nature or frequency of the care needed, and whether an attendant is needed.

Most Veterans must call 866-606-8198 to verify eligibility and set up an appointment. Veterans who qualify under the wait-time requirement will be contacted by VA partners directly to set up an appointment.

Visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact for more information or to chat live with a VA representative.

VACAA or “Choice Act”

Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014

Choice Act allows Veterans to be seen by community providers for non-emergency and pre-authorized services under certain conditions:

- Veterans residing over a 40 mile driving distance from a VHA provider (20 miles in NH)
- If significant geographical terrain interferes with driving (mountain range, body of water, or requires use of a Ferry)
- If the Veteran is unable to be seen within 30 days of desired appointment date for a scheduled appointment or where services are not available to begin with.
- If the service is not available within VHA

To receive Choice referrals the Non-VHA organization will need to become a Choice recognized service provider.

Health Net is the contractors that handle the Choice Act for VACT. This is a contracted service and is not a branch of the VA.

Veteran's Choice Program

- **Medical Care**

- Pre-authorization is required for care
- If additional services needed, provider may submit request to Health Net
- Emergency care is not covered under Veterans Choice, but there are other mechanisms for VA to pay for non-VA emergency care

- **Payment**

- Community providers are paid by Health Net
- Health Net or Tricare is paid by the VA
- Cost Sharing: If an eligible Veteran has another health-care plan, VA will be secondarily responsible for costs associated with non-service connected care.

Medical Services *Not* Available through Choice

- The Choice Program contracts with Health Net to include all inpatient and outpatient medical services that are normally provided in the Veterans Medical Benefits Package except for the following:
 - Nursing home care
 - Hospice
 - Long Term Acute Hospitals (LTAC)
 - Homemaker and home health aide services- Provider Agreements
 - Chronic dialysis treatments
 - Dental care
 - Pediatric services
 - Durable Medical Equipment (DME), including eyeglasses
 - Non-urgent/non-emergent medications
 - Compensation and Pension (C&P) examinations

Choice Program Contact Information

Choice Program Call Center: 1-866-606-8198

Health Net Customer Service Number: 800-979-9620

(VA) Adverse Credit Reporting – Overview

Summary

- Veterans experiencing adverse credit reporting or debt collection that is a result of inappropriately billed claims or delayed payments for authorized health care received by community care medical providers can call the **VA's Community Care Contact Center at 1- 877-881-7618 for assistance.**
- The Center will work to resolve instances of improper Veteran billing, assist community care medical providers with delayed payments, and work with the medical providers to expunge adverse credit reports that are a result of delayed payments.



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